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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 HARARE 001007

SIPDIS

NOFORN

AF FOR DAS T. WOODS  
AF/S FOR B. NEULING  
NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR C. COURVILLE  
DS FOR IP/AF AND IP/ITA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/31/2010

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [ASEC](#) [Z1](#)

SUBJECT: ARMED RESISTANCE GROUP SEEKS US ASSISTANCE

Classified By: Charge d, Affaires, a.i., Eric T. Schultz under Section 1  
.4 b/d

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Summary  
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1. (S/NF) The Embassy has received several requests from various groups for meetings with the Ambassador/CDA in the past few weeks to discuss overthrowing the Mugabe regime. We have rejected all of these meetings, out of concern that they could have been attempts by the GOZ to implicate the USG in such an agenda. However, the Australian Embassy did meet with one of these groups and provided us with a readout. The same group then obtained a meeting with an Embassy political officer under false pretenses. The readouts of these meetings indicate that there may be growing interest in armed resistance on the part of some regime opponents. The MDC was not implicated in the group,s plans. End summary.

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Australian Readout  
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2. (S/NF) On July 13, the Australian DCM, Mark Lynch, called on CDA to provide a readout of a meeting he had had the previous day with Learnmore Muzvidzwa. Lynch said Muzvidzwa had introduced himself as the Managing Director of Dreiford Trading, a firm that specialized in hunting safaris. (N.B. At CDA,s request, RMAS ran a background check on this individual, which came up negative.) Lynch said Muzvidza had said Zimbabweans were at the end of their patience with the Mugabe regime. He had said he was part of a group with contacts in the CIO, the military, and the police that planned to overthrow the government. The group did not include the MDC. He had claimed to have 500 men under arms in the Chihota region southeast of Harare. The group,s operations plan, which he had requested the Australians vet, called for the coup to occur when Mugabe was out of the country.

3. (S/NF) Lynch said he had declined to have the plan vetted and had also rejected requests for financial and material assistance, noting that the Australian Government did not support the violent overthrow of the Mugabe regime. That said, Lynch said Muzvidzwa had struck him as a credible figure. He added that Muzvidzwa had said he was requesting meetings with the American and British Embassies as well. The CDA responded that he had already declined the meeting, out of concern that it could be part of a CIO effort to distract attention from international outrage over Operation Restore Order by implicating the West in an effort to overthrow the GOZ.

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Embassy Meeting  
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4. (S/NF) On July 20, poloff met with Muzvidzwa, ostensibly to discuss the plight of Zimbabweans as a result of Operation Restore Order. Muzvidza repeated his claim to represent a group that had 500 men under arms in the Chihota district. He wanted advice and support from the Embassy. He said he had approached the Australian and UK embassies with the same &plan.8 Poloff told him the U.S. did not and would not provide support for violent overthrow of Zimbabwe,s government and closed the meeting.

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COMMENT  
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5. (S/NF) It is probably inevitable that given the GOZ,s turn to more repressive tactics to maintain its hold on power, the idea of armed resistance may begin to appeal to some Zimbabweans. Certainly there are plenty of weapons in the country and plenty of experience using them. That said, our judgment is that the military and the police remain largely loyal to the regime and would be able to handle a

coup attempt or an armed uprising with little difficulty. We will continue to monitor this situation but will also continue to attempt to avoid direct meetings with groups such as Muzvidzwa,s. The GOZ is quite capable of running such an operation at us and of using the very fact of a meeting to distract attention from the GOZ,s current travails.

SCHULTZ